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INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Broceni Cement Plant

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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1. Broceni Camp No. 7834/4: The camp strength fluctuated between 200 and 1200 men. Eventually, the camp complement consisted only of Germans. A few subaltern officers were in the camp. Lodging was in a stone building which was part of a former artificial slate factory in the area of the large cement plant. Equipment was very primitive in the beginning, but improved later.

2. The informant described health conditions during the first two years as bad. However, there were few deaths because the Latvians gave assistance whenever they could. Washing and bathing facilities had to be set up eventually by PWs. Medicine was scarce.

25X1 3. [redacted] the construction of the large Broceni Cement Plant (on the railroad approximately seven km NE of Saldus). [redacted] 25X1
25X1 [redacted] The cement plant under consideration belongs to the Associated Cement Plant in Riga* which manages other cement plants. The Broceni plant was started in 1938. It was further developed during the German occupation. Parts of the plant were dismantled by German troops at the time of the evacuation of the Baltic Provinces, and other parts of it were so completely destroyed by hostilities that the plant in 1945 was practically unfit for operation and did not have one single bit of equipment at its disposal. All building plans and sketches were lacking at the beginning of the construction, and everything had to be drafted anew very carefully so far as making use of old installations again was concerned. The plant is to be developed into one of the most efficient cement plant installations from a production standpoint, the importance of which should extend far beyond a local sphere of activity. A Soviet construction firm, which is under command of the Baltic Fleet, is responsible for construction of the new parts of the factory. Thus, it is to be assumed that at least a fairly good portion of the cement produced is to be used for naval construction.

4. The following buildings and parts of the factory are new or partially constructed: power installation, clinker-brick bunker and clinker-mill, crane installation by the clinker-pile, two cement-rotating furnaces, machine shop, the large coal bunker, and the 4-story administration

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building in the southwestern part of the area on the road to Saldus (Frauenburg). In the remaining installations, the mechanical equipment is either new or has been brought up to very modern standards. The built-up factory area is approximately one km. square. The factory is under the jurisdiction of the Latvian Ministry of Interior. A former officer of the Soviet Army, JAGERS, appeared to be plant manager.

5. The following are some of the more important installations and equipment of the Broceni Cement Plant:

a. Limestone bunker (storage): This bunker is filled by a plant railroad which brings the limestone from quarries 2 - 3 km. away.

b. Two quarries: By means of a two-belt carrying device, limestone is brought into the two quarries, where the coarse lumps are granulated.

c. Three mixing mills: The granulated limestone is brought to the mixing mills on a carrier device. It is then mixed with water and ground to a fine mud-like texture.

d. Eight silos (18 m high): The limestone mixture is brought to the silos from the mills by means of a special trough.

e. Clay agikator installation: This installation also gets its supply from the clay pits by the plant railroad. A mud-like mixture of loam is made here which must be added to the mud-like mixture in the silos.

f. Cement-rotating furnace (Smith type - Copenhagen): This furnace is now in operation.

g. Two very modern cement-rotating furnaces (Polysius type - Dessau): Not yet in operation. These are still waiting for the appropriate attachment for the special coal dust blower.

h. Coal mill: The coal mill is located in the basement of the cement-rotating furnace installation. It reduces pit-coal of high quality into coal dust.

i. Clinker-brick pile: The cement bricks, which are produced in the rotating furnaces, arrive at the clinker pile in blocks ranging from fist to head size by means of two feeding-belts.

j. Four clinker-brick bunkers (two still under construction): The clinkers are forwarded here from the clinker pile by means of a large crane with wide supports which was put into operation in May 1948.

k. Clinker mill: The clinker bricks, having been alloyed with gypsum at the bunkers, go to the clinker mill, where the actual cement dust is produced.

l. Cement silos (one in operation, three others under construction): The cement dust is transferred to the silos from the clinker mill by means of a special blower device.

m. Large coal bunkers: The final concreting of these bunkers was finished in the summer of 1948. Coal is delivered to the cement-rotating furnaces from these coal bunkers by means of a strong carrier-belt device.

n. Machine shop with an iron foundry and a small coupling furnace: The most significant plant repairs can be made in this shop.

o. Power installation: This installation was 80% destroyed. Rebuilding of it has just begun. Current is presently supplied by the Tekums power installation on the Dvina River.

p. Transformer station.

q. New administration building: A 4-story structure located on the road to Saldus (Frauenburg). Its entire equipment was completed in the summer of 1948.

r. Artificial slate factory: This factory, which has been used as quarters for PWs, will presently be put back into operation.

s. Special loading ramp: A special track from the plant's narrow gauge railroad leads to this ramp, which is located in the immediate vicinity of the station. Large quantities of coarse limestone are shipped to the Associated Cement Plant in Riga.

t. Saw mill: It is located in the southern part of the area, and provides the plant with a supply of wood and boards.

u. Two comparatively large dwelling houses: These houses are occupied by laborers and employees and belong to the plant area.

6. The clinker-brick pile, about 200 m. long and approximately 400 m. wide, was covered with a roof in the spring of 1948. The roof rested upon concrete pillars 25 m. high which, somewhat cracked, have to bear the weight of the bridge-crane. The clinker-brick bunker and cement mill occupy a building about 40 m. square. The building in which the mixing mills are housed is about 30 m. square. The eight silos for mixed limestone reach a height of 18 m., and the loam mixing installation is 25 m. high. The building with the cement rotating-furnaces measures approximately 120 m. long and 30 m. wide. Two of the three smoke stacks for the rotating furnace installation are under construction. The large coal storage bin is 80 x 30 m.

7. Production: Plant equipment is modern. Nothing whatsoever is spared anywhere in construction. It should be one of the most up-to-date cement plants of the entire Soviet Union. Production itself is directed everywhere by means of electric control devices, which thus far have caused all kinds of interruptions in the work, but which are being constantly improved. Just one of the cement-rotating furnaces is in operation. The production capacity is, accordingly, limited. The Smith furnace uses 80 - 100 tons of coal a day, which is burned by the coal-dust blower method. Both of the Polysius furnaces were to be put in operation at the beginning of 1949. The average production at the present time is reported to be 150 tons of clinker-bricks on one shift. The actual capacity, however, of 24-hour production is only about 200 tons of clinker-bricks.

8. Finished cement is partly loaded in sacks and partly loaded as dust directly into waiting freight cars. It is a fact that in one day up to 60 cars (the large 60-ton rail cars) are loaded with cement, and then the loading lapses for several days, with the result that an exact estimate of the production rate could never be ascertained. Furthermore, Broceni delivers not only finished cement but also limestone, three PW detachments were constantly busy loading on the special loading ramp at the station, from which shipments destined for the Associated Cement Plant in Riga (about 40 - 60 cars daily) were sent.

9. The plant disposes of five special spurs: track for loading limestone, track for the clinker-brick pile, machine shop track, artificial slate factory track, and the coal bunker track. Besides this, the plant maintains a special narrow-gauge railroad which leads to the limestone quarries about 3 km. distant, to the sawmill, and to its clay pits.

where a steamshovel (Ohrenstein and Köppel) is located. This plant railroad disposes of one wood-gas locomotive (delivered from Finland), one old Henschel locomotive, and three other German confiscated or reparations narrow-gauge locomotives.

10. The factory was guarded by civilians who were armed with German carbines.

11. In the spring and summer of 1948, all Latvians who were still at the plant were withdrawn from the plant and replaced by Russians. Tendencies are appearing, especially in Latvia, as security measures, to transfer wholesale the local population to the interior of USSR and to settle the area thus evacuated with Soviets from the interior. Thus the Latvian population, which previously was around three million, was increased in 1948 to six million, all imported Soviets.

12. Until the summer of 1948, personnel increased to 300 civilian employees and about 800 PWs. Furthermore, only approximately 200 of the PWs are engaged in actual production, the others are working on construction or loading.

13. The plant runs on three 8-hour shifts, with the result that each shift requires hardly more than 80 - 100 civilian employees. This small figure is made possible by the modern and technically improved equipment.

25X1 [redacted] Comment: Also referred to as the Riga Cement Association and the Associated Cement Factory of Riga.